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**Abortion, foster care: the fight to
choose about having children**



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Demonstrators get unexpected support

GLDC Snubs Dukakis at Abortion Rights Rally

By Karen Kahn

BOSTON — Lesbians and gay men opposed to Governor Dukakis' anti-gay and -lesbian foster policy demonstrated here January 22 against his presence as keynote speaker at an abortion rights rally. The foster care policy, which officially goes into effect February 1, sets up a hierarchy of placements designed to exclude single people and gay men and lesbians from guardianship of foster children.

Approximately 30 members of the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee (GLDC), organized last spring to overturn the policy, attended the Massachusetts Coalition for Choice 13th anniversary

commemoration of the legalization of abortion, at Boston's Church of the Covenant. They expressed their support for reproductive rights as well as their dismay at the Coalition's decision to invite the governor to speak.

Protesters handed out leaflets to audience members and rally organizers, stating the connection between "our right to choose whether to bear children" and "our right to choose in what sort of homes we will raise them." During Governor Dukakis' remarks, they stood and turned their backs to the podium. With large pink triangles pinned to their clothing and "foster equality"

signs, the demonstrators made a powerful visual statement.

The steering committee of Coalition for Choice consists of Planned Parenthood-Mass., Mass. CHOICE (state affiliate of the National Abortion Rights Action League), the Civil Liberties Union of Mass., the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights (RCAR)-Mass., the Mass. League of Women Voters, and the Reproductive Rights National Network (R2N2) of Boston. According to Shelley Mains of R2N2, committee members argued that the governor was invited because he appeared to be backing away from support for the reproductive rights movement. In the face of a possible referendum on the November ballot, which would ask Massachusetts voters to approve a state constitutional amendment barring the use of Medicaid funds to pay for abortion, they said they believed it was essential to push the governor to declare publicly his support for state-funded abortion.

Some Coalition members took strong exception to the GLDC action. Seemingly nervous about a possible disruption of the event or a confrontation with the governor, ushers asked GLDC members leafletting inside the hall to leave, and, in some cases, harassed those standing during Dukakis' speech. Susan Shaer, president of the Massachusetts League of Women Voters, told *GCN* she was afraid "protesters would turn others away from the event by appearing to be barricading the entrance."

Neither Shaer nor Nicki Nichols Gamble, executive director of Planned Parenthood and chairperson of the Coalition, said they saw any direct connection between the foster care policy and the issue of reproductive rights. Nichols Gamble, speaking for the Coalition, told *GCN* she applauded the governor's support for the reproductive rights movement, and argued that audience members probably disagreed with the gover-



Standing up to the Governor

By Debbie Rich

nor on a whole range of issues. "We must negotiate our differences, and celebrate our unity on this one issue," she asserted.

The Coalition, however, was not in full agreement over the meaning of the Governor's presence or that of GLDC. Both Massachusetts NOW members and members of Boston R2N2 expressed support for the GLDC. Shelley Mains told *GCN* she considers it important to point out the inconsistency of Dukakis' speaking out for abortion rights while implementing policy against gay and lesbian foster parents. Moreover, she explained, "Members of the feminist community need to realize that the lesbian and gay community has been consistently supportive of the reproductive rights movement, and deserves more than to be made invisible by the choices of the Coalition."

If the Coalition was somewhat

at odds over how to handle the GLDC protest, speakers at the rally were surprisingly forthcoming in their support for the gay and lesbian community. Dr. Mary Hunt, from Catholics for a Free Choice, began her address with a forceful statement, clearly articulating the connections between reproductive rights and the new DSS policy: "The same efforts to control choice in the reproductive area are at play in the volatile situation created by the state of Massachusetts' prejudicial approach to foster care. Let us not forget as we struggle on the abortion front that children's right to safe, abuse-free homes, with loving guardians of whatever sexual preference, is something that we must also safeguard."

Following Dr. Hunt, Boston School Committee member Juanita Wade (in remarks read in her absence) also drew attention to

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Abortion is still legal, but...

Roe v. Wade: 13 Years Later

By Stephanie Poggi

Lesbians and gay men in Boston commemorated the 13th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion by arguing for a broader reproductive rights agenda that includes lesbian and gay foster parenting

News commentary

rights. Meanwhile, across the U.S., supporters of abortion rights rallied on the January 22 anniversary to gather momentum for a stronger resistance to opponents.

Abortion rights activists delivered coat hangers to legislators, symbolizing the days of back-alley abortions, and held rallies and candlelight vigils in a number of cities. In Boston, approximately 50 reproductive rights activists picketed the annual anti-abortion rally at Faneuil Hall on January 19. The event

featured U.S. Rep. Henry Hyde (R-IL), author of the 1977 Hyde Amendment which cut off federal Medicaid for abortion.

Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn welcomed the "return to God," anti-abortion gathering. Taking his cue from President Reagan, who welcomed approximately 35,000 anti-abortion activists to Washington, D.C., Flynn declared a "Respect for Life Day" in Boston.

Earlier on the 19th, the South Middlesex chapter of NOW picketed Cardinal Law's residence in response to his public anti-abortion fervor. Abortion rights activists in New York assailed the Roman Catholic bishops of the state who have asked their congregations to sign postcards urging Governor Cuomo to end New York state Medicaid for abor-

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Despite strong church opposition

Activists Optimistic on N.Y. Rights Bill Success

By Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves

NEW YORK — For the sixteenth time in as many years, the New York City Council will consider a bill insuring equal rights for lesbians and gay men. Activists anticipate that the measure will pass.

Mayor Edward I. Koch introduced the legislation, this year known as Intro. 2, on January 21. The bill would outlaw discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in housing, employment, and public accommodation. The measure defines "sexual orientation" as "heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality." Current legislation forbids discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, and marital status.

The legislation is as notable for what it will not do as for what it will do. It specifically excludes the possibility of affirmative action quotas based on sexual orientation. It does not "limit or override the present exemptions in the human rights law, including those related to employment concerns having fewer than four employees...or any religious or denominational institution." Further, the law states that it does not "endorse any particular behavior or way of life."

The lesbian and gay rights bill was first introduced in city council in 1971. It was released from the General Welfare Committee only in 1974, and was then defeated on the council floor. Activists

generally agree that the bill's progress out of committee was blocked by former council majority leader Tom Cuite. As majority leader, Cuite was responsible for committee assignments, and reportedly stacked the General Welfare Committee in an attempt to block the bill. Cuite retired in the last election, and his successor as majority leader, Peter Vallone, has said that he will not attempt to stack the committee for or against the bill.

A flurry of organizing is expected, both for and against the measure. Andy Humm of the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (CLGR) said that the group is coordinating a letter-writing

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Dukakis, et. al. sued

Foster Care Suit Filed

By Gordon Gottlieb

BOSTON — Four weeks after the state's official policy on foster care was published in the Massachusetts Register, a coalition of organizations and individuals filed suit in Suffolk Superior Court on January 30, challenging the state's foster care regulations.

According to Kevin Cathcart, executive director of Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD), the suit seeks a preliminary injunction prohibiting enforcement of the current regulations. The suit, *Babets et al. v. Dukakis et al.*, maintains the state violates due process, equal protection, and privacy rights of those Massachusetts citizens effectively barred from foster parenting because they are single persons, unmarried persons, or gay men or lesbians. Given the unmet need for additional foster parents, the policy is not in the best interest of foster children in the Commonwealth, Cathcart said.

The defendants in the case are Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, Human Services Secretary Philip Johnston, and Department of Social Services (DSS) Secretary Marie Matava.

Bringing suit are GLAD, the Civil Liberties Union of

Massachusetts (CLUM), and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), joined by four individuals whose foster parenting status has been restricted. The four are: Don Babets and David Jean, the gay Roxbury couple whose foster children were removed from their home with much public fanfare last May; Rev. Kathryn Piccard, who, although a foster parent previously for 17 children, was disqualified from future foster placements when she replied "private" to DSS inquiries about her sexual orientation; and Catherine Brayden, a divorced mother of two and approved foster parent, who first refused, but finally felt compelled, to respond to questions about her sexual orientation.

Addressing one impact the policy has had on Massachusetts social workers, Doug Peterson of the NASW said the current policy "compels social workers to violate the Commonwealth's own social work licensing law's code of ethics, which specifically proscribes against discrimination on the basis of sexual preference."

Jenifer Firestone, a member of the Gay and Lesbian

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News Notes

quote of the week

“The only thing the gays said was they would be jobless — the couturiers, et cetera, the hairdressers, and all of that [if Corazon Aquino beats Ferdinand Marcos for president of the Philippines].... And the gays said, ‘You know, we gays, we are men become women because of our reach for beauty. You know us. We love beauty, and without love — and they say hate, and we love God and we don’t like Communists.’”

— *Imelda Marcos, wife of President Marcos, still arguing that her husband will win the “gay vote” in the upcoming elections for the presidency. Mrs. Marcos said dressmakers and hairdressers told her they were afraid they would lose their jobs under a “less flamboyant administration,” according to the New York Times.*

Marcos has ruled the Philippines for the past 20 years, imposing a bloody and violent dictatorship.

the quatrefoil

MINNEAPOLIS, MN — The Quatrefoil Library, Inc., a non-profit research center for the lesbian and gay community, will open February 1 here. The library will house a collection of approximately 1,300 volumes, some archival materials, and newspaper and periodical files, according to the *New York Native*.

Most of the library’s collection belongs to Quatrefoil board member David Irwin, who donated many out-of-print editions which are difficult to find in most public libraries, including a complete collection of the *Mattachine Review*, a pioneering gay and lesbian magazine of the 1950s and 1960s. Irwin stated plans for Quatrefoil to “grow into an archive and resource center with records and videos.”

— *Janice Irvine*

coming conferences

SYDNEY, Australia — The Eleventh National Conference on Lesbians and Gay Men will be held on April 25-27 at the University of New South Wales here. The conference will be organized on a “multi-stream” basis to allow for diversity. Streams in this year’s conference will include Youth, History, Women, and AIDS.

The organizers are seeking a logo and theme for the conference, since suggested themes (such as “Harder, harder, faster, faster”) have been defeated. For more information, contact 11th Conference Collective, PO Box K485, Haymarket, NSW, 2000, Australia.

* * *

WASHINGTON, DC — The Seventh National Lesbian/Gay Health Conference and Fourth National AIDS Forum will be held March 13-16 at George Washington University here. A series of workshops and seminars will focus on developments in health care delivery to lesbians and gay men, with topics to include AIDS, substance abuse, aging, and general health issues.

Sponsors of the forum include the National Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation, the George Washington University Medical School, the D.C. AIDS Taskforce, the Whitman-Walker Clinic, the Centers for Disease Control, the National Institutes of Health, and five other federal health agencies.

For more information, contact: NLGHF Conference, P.O. Box 65472, Washington, DC 20035, or call (202) 797-3708.

aids in the eastern bloc

MOSCOW — Despite vigorous denials from government officials, AIDS has appeared in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and the U.S.S.R. Both Soviet and visiting Swedish physicians confirmed that they have seen people with AIDS in a Moscow clinic, according to the *Advocate*. People have died of AIDS in both Poland and Czechoslovakia, although Czechoslovakia and all of the other Eastern bloc countries except Hungary maintain that they are AIDS-free. This puts the Eastern European countries in the tenuous position of denying the existence of AIDS while attempting to establish AIDS-related services.

East Germany, for example, has established an AIDS clinic, Poland’s AIDS Emergency Research Council is testing 5,000 blood samples from high-risk groups and Hungary has instituted a telephone hotline for AIDS information.

— *Janice Irvine*

minor victory: afsc vs. the boston globe

BOSTON — In response to persuasion from the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the *Boston Globe* has reversed its policy prohibiting use of the words “gay” or “lesbian” in classified employment ads. AFSC had been trying for several years to place ads that encouraged applications from various groups according to its affirmative action plan, which reads: “AFSC is an affirmative action employer and encourages applications from people of color, women, and people who are gay, lesbian, handicapped or ex-prisoners.”

The *Globe* consistently refused to print AFSC’s ads as written and substituted the phrase “without regard to race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation or national origin.” By a process of elimination, AFSC staff discovered that it was the words “gay” and “lesbian” that disturbed the *Globe*. AFSC Executive Secretary Doug Hostetter wrote to the *Globe* in early January, and sent a copy of the letter to the Boston Human Rights Commission. The letter said in part that the *Globe*’s policy prevented AFSC from exercising its commitment to an affirmative action plan that intentionally seeks to recruit gay men and lesbians as members of a group “who have suffered systematic discrimination in society.”

In a phone call to AFSC January 21, *Globe* Classified Advertising Manager Frank Limoncelli told Hostetter the letter had provoked discussion, that the points it made were valid, and that it was time for the newspaper to change its policy. Limoncelli said he was informing all his staff that the change would be effective immediately.

— *Tatiana Schreiber*

celebrating black history month

NEW YORK — Men of All Colors Together (MACT/NY) will celebrate Black History Month this February with an entertainment extravaganza, Saturday, February 15, 7:30 p.m., at the Lesbian/Gay Community Center.

Emcee Gwenn Rogers and poets, percussionists, and singers will provide entertainment followed by a disco/rock dance. Artists include the Lavender Light Gospel Choir, poets Arthur Wilson, Irare Sabasu, Donald Woods, Hattie Gossett, and Salih Michael Fisher. Kuumba Caravan, the all-women’s African drum and percussion group, and Xotika, featuring Yves Lubin, will be special guests for the evening.

The event is a fundraiser for MACT/NY and will cost \$10, \$8 for MACT members. For more information, call MACT/NY at (212) 245-6366, or (212) 222-9794.

— *Stephanie Poggi*

And now the BAD NEWS. . .

No tips on safe sex would be complete without a list of things NOT to do as well. Since these are already pretty well known, and not much fun to talk about, we'll simply list them here once more. Therefore, on the negative side, if you want to enjoy safe sex, please DON'T:

1. Drink cum.
2. Eat asshole.
3. Take cum in the ass.
4. Drink piss.
5. Exchange saliva.

6. Have any kind of sex without washing with soap immediately afterwards.
7. Have orgies with many partners at one time.
8. Have sex when feeling run-down or "fluish"
9. Have sex when you know you're sick.
10. Overindulge in immunity-altering drugs (i.e., poppers, cocaine, ups, downs, marijuana, alcohol, etc.) during sex.

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f d by canada customs

OTTAWA — *The Body Politic* reprinted the above two boxes from *Blueboy*, Vol. 9, No. 9. The top box appeared in the U.S. edition; the lower box is the censored version allowed in the Canadian edition.

Although even the complete U.S. version of the *Blueboy* tips leaves much to be desired (e.g., No. 7 says no “orgies” with many partners, while safe sex is what is at issue and not the number of partners per se), Canda Customs seems to find dirty words more deadly than unsafe sex.

Customs also deleted a line from the original text (not pictured above) about getting fucked with a dildo.

— *Stephanie Poggi*

pig landlord meets rats

LOS ANGELES — A municipal judge here has sentenced a slum landlord to 60 days in jail or 30 days in jail and 30 days in a room in one of his run-down buildings, according to *off our backs*. Dr. Milton Abel, a neurosurgeon, requested time to consider which was worse.

Abel has been found guilty on numerous occasions of failing to make basic repairs in the buildings he owns. Tenants described major leaks and holes in apartments through which rats, mice, and roaches entered, little or no security, and exorbitant rents.

After announcing the sentence, Judge Veronica Simmons McBeth was told that six other slum landlords called to inquire about the cost of bringing their buildings up to code.

— *Stephanie Poggi*

foster policy protesters on trial

BOSTON — Thirteen lesbian and gay protesters arrested in the State House during a demonstration (See *GCN*, Vol. 13, No. 27) against Governor Dukakis’ homophobic foster policy were charged at a January 24 hearing with trespassing. Judge Herbert Hershong declared that the case would be continued without a finding for sixty days, insuring that the protesters will not have a criminal record if they are not arrested again within sixty days of their trial.

Five protesters gave testimony in defense of their demonstration despite frequent interruptions from the district attorney who claimed that such testimony was irrelevant. The defendants posited that although there was sufficient evidence to convict them of a crime, they had to do what they did to prevent worse harm than the crime itself. Since legal attempts to change the foster policy had proven fruitless, activist Jenifer Firestone told *GCN* civil disobedience was the only recourse to prevent harm to foster children awaiting placements and lesbians and gay men who want to be foster parents.

Judge Hershong, at the protesters’ request, replaced the usual \$50 court costs with five hours of community service to a charitable agency of each protester’s choice. The defendant’s legal counsel, Katherine Triantafillou, was placed in charge of monitoring this charitable service.

Lisa “Hershey” Hirschkop, who is one of the thirteen being tried in this case and who was also arrested at Governor Dukakis’ State of the State address on January 14 (See *GCN*, Vol. 13, No. 28) was not singled out in the trial due to the additional arrest. Hirschkop is being charged with assault and battery of a police officer and will go to trial February 4 at Boston Municipal Courthouse. The Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee is organizing a presence for that to “keep the judge honest.” The trial will be on the fourth floor at 9:00 a.m. Supporters are urged to attend.

— *Kim Westheimer*

but can he type?

WASHINGTON, DC — The League of Women Voters has hired a man to be executive director for the first time since the organization was founded in 1920. Dorothy Ridings, the president of the league, said, “We didn’t restrict our search process to male or female, just as we don’t to Black or white or any other factor.”

On January 27, Grant P. Thompson will become chief of the organization, which is best known for sponsoring debates between U.S. presidential candidates.

— *Janice Irvine*

national march against racism

PHILADELPHIA — On February 15, beginning at noon at the John F. Kennedy Plaza in Center City here, people from around the country will march together “for unity, justice and equality.”

Organized by the National Mobilization Against Racism, endorsers of the march include the Philadelphia Lesbian and Gay Task Force, African National Congress of South Africa, National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, Organization of Asian Women, Women’s Peace Encampment, and the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee.

The march is organized in response not only to the rash of recent attacks here, including assaults on Black families and an interracial couple, the bombing of West Philadelphia, and arson of a Jewish community center, but in response to the national climate of racism promoted by the Reagan Administration. For more information, call National Mobilization Against Racism, (215) 387-7522.

— *Stephanie Poggi*

Civil Rights Act Invoked in Gaybashing Case

By Kim Westheimer

BOSTON — Two gay men who were assaulted in the Park Street subway station may charge their attackers with violating their civil rights under the state Civil Rights Act. If the court accepts the civil rights violation charge, the men would be the first gay people covered under the Civil Rights Act solely on the basis of their sexual preference.

Use of the Civil Rights Act in this case would be an important precedent, according to Fred Mandel, a gay man who chairs Boston's Human Rights Commission. Currently, lesbians and gay men are not covered under the Civil Rights Act, which is generally used to prosecute cases where people have been victimized due to their race or ethnicity. Mandel hopes that the Boston Human Rights ordinance, which prohibits discrimination against lesbians and gay men, can be used in conjunction with the prosecuting powers of the Civil Rights Act to increase the sentences of the men charged in this case of gay bashing.

The men who were attacked, Mike Ferguson and Rick Rudolf, had boarded the subway near their home in Dorchester on the evening of January 20. Two men, David Prairia, 19, and Paul Frawley, 17, began haranguing them with epithets such as, "What are you looking at, you fucking fags?" and "We're going to get you, you better not get off at our stop."

When Ferguson and Rudolf exited the train at Park Street, Prairia and Frawley followed. Prairia hit Rudolf in the face and stomach and jabbed him in the ribs with a razor blade, resulting in a minor laceration.

While the assailants boarded another subway car, Rudolf and Ferguson notified the Mass. Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) police of the attack. The police apprehended Frawley and Prairia at another subway station.

Frawley and Prairia were charged with assault and battery with a dangerous weapon and with carrying alcohol illegally as minors. While Frawley was convicted as charged, Prairia was con-

victed for assault and battery and concealing a dangerous weapon, a lesser charge.

Prairia was given a one-year suspended sentence and two years on probation. Frawley was sentenced to one year in jail and two years of probation. He will be eligible for parole in 90 days.

Frawley will appeal his conviction of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon on February 7.

The case is under investigation by the Boston Police

Department's community disorders unit, which traditionally investigates crimes covered under the Civil Rights Act. The Human Rights Commission is working with the police to make a strong case for the attorney general to prosecute Frawley and Prairia. According to Mandel, the police have been cooperative.

In addition to possibly increasing Frawley and Prairia's sentences, Mandel believes the Civil Rights Act could be useful in

documenting incidences of gay and lesbian bashing in Massachusetts. If the court system begins recording cases of gay bashing, said Mandel, it would be possible for an agency to record the incidents. For this to be effective, however, district attorneys would need to be convinced to prosecute people under the Civil Rights Act. Mandel said he does not believe the Civil Rights Act is currently used as often as it could be.

Part of Flynn's anti-porn strategy?

Gay Porn Theater Faces Licensing Board Pressure

By Kim Westheimer

BOSTON — The Boston Licensing Division, apparently under pressure from Mayor Flynn's administration, is attempting to revoke the entertainment license for North Station Cinema, a gay male porn movie theater. At a public hearing on January 27, the cinema was charged with changing its name without notifying the Licensing Division, and illegally showing films which exclude people under the age of 18.

Diane Modica, commissioner of the Licensing Division, told *GCN* that under a Boston zoning law passed in the late 1960s, pornographic films which have restrictive admission policies regarding age can only be shown in the Combat Zone. Only theaters that were in existence before the law went into effect can legally show porn outside of that zone.

In 1981, Louis Santiago received an entertainment permit to show "Spanish-American family films" at the cinema, located at 276 Friend Street. The cinema was then known as the Pan American Cinema. According to David Santoro, the assistant manager of the North Station Cinema, Santiago showed straight porn films during the week and "family" films on the weekend. Santiago could not be reached for comment.

The cinema changed its name to

North Station Cinema and began showing gay porn seven days a week in July of 1985.

Santoro and those who testified against the license revocation believe that North Station Cinema is under attack from a growing movement to eradicate porn from Boston. "Their goal is close all porno theaters in Boston," said Santoro. "We're a good start because we're on shaky ground — it was time to renew our license and there were these minor infractions which would get anyone else [i.e., theaters not showing porn] a slap on the wrist."

Santoro told *GCN* that City Hall is also attacking the cinema on other fronts. For example, the cinema occupancy permit was recently renewed, according to Santoro, yet on January 26, City Hall revoked the permit due to the admission policy and name change. The cinema is going to appeal this decision.

Supporters of North Station Cinema, such as Gary Dotterman, an aide to gay Boston City Councillor David Scondras, concur that the Flynn administration is attempting systematically to ferret out porn cinemas in the city.

State Representative Salvatore DiMasi (D-Boston), who told *GCN* he testified against the theater because it "doesn't fit into

that neighborhood," agrees with Dotterman that the mayor's office is trying to do away with porn. "The licensing board seems to be going after these porn theaters. What I've seen may be a policy of the Flynn administration," said DiMasi. He added, "The North Station area is being redeveloped for commercial and residential property. It [a theater] is not conducive for having people invest their money there."

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13 Years Later

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tions.

The few remaining states that provide any state Medicaid for abortion, including Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, continue to face funding threats. These attacks are a strategy abortion opponents have pursued for several years as the first step to eliminating abortion rights altogether. While Massachusetts residents may vote on Medicaid for abortions this November, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court last December cut off funding for abortions except in cases of rape or incest or in cases in which women may die as a result of the pregnancy.

Other efforts to limit access to abortion include laws to restrict teenagers' access to abortion and those that would force women seeking abortions to hear counseling on "fetal death."

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to review two cases, one in Pennsylvania and another in Illinois, that attempt to further limit abortion. Reproductive rights activists express little optimism the court will not rule for abortion opponents.

At the same time, firebombing of abortion clinics and birth-control counseling agencies continues, with approximately 30 such incidents documented for 1985.

Other escalating reproductive rights attacks include the federal social service funding cuts that contributed to an infant mortality rate for Black and Latina women that is twice that for white women. Although never adequately funded, budget allocations for daycare have also dramatically decreased since 1981. Sterilization abuse and

effects of VDTs on pregnant women continue to go largely undocumented.

* * *

Perhaps not surprisingly, mainstream media coverage of January 22 demonstrations focused heavily on opponents of abortion rights, barely acknowledging the actions of reproductive rights activists.

13 years after the *Roe v. Wade* decision, when the right of women to control their reproductive lives is addressed at all, it is trivialized. To note just one blatant media attack, *Saturday Night Live* staged a "Miss Pregnant Teenage America" skit on January 25. Featuring/exploiting Black comedian Danitra Vance — "Miss Illinois" — as the winner and a white "Miss South Carolina" as the runner-up, the sketch callously ridicules the devastating impact of teenage pregnancy on poor women in the U.S.

Vance is portrayed doing a breakdance number for her "prenatal care nutrition break," a despicable twist on the painfully real lack of pre-natal care for many pregnant Black women.

Both Vance and "Miss South Carolina" are presented as simpletons who are obsessed with men, and whose bodies are only good for a laugh. So much for the humor of the '80s.

Danitra Vance will perform at a benefit for Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press on Sunday, March 2, 5-10 p.m. at the Limelight, 6th Avenue and 20th St., New York, along with Afro-American percussionist Edwina Lee Tyler.

GLDC

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the foster care policy. Calling the policy "an attack on women of color," she demanded that we stand together "against the narrowing of all our choices." The overwhelmingly positive response from the audience made it clear that many of those present agreed with Wade's assessment of the foster care policy as "sexist, heterosexist, and racist."

Other speakers at the rally included Dr. Kenneth Edelin from Boston City Hospital, Joyce Miller from the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and Gayle Brooks, organizer of the campaign to defeat the Bristol, Conn. anti-abortion referendum last November. All spoke eloquently

of the need for *all* women, no matter what their financial circumstances, to have access to safe and legal abortions. Their speeches were interspersed with music sung by performer Martha Leader, who in keeping with the theme of the evening, sang new lyrics to Bonnie Lockhart's song "I Still Ain't Satisfied":

They say our lives are our own

biz

But I still ain't satisfied.

'Cause they may rule no foster kids

Still ain't satisfied.

We won't sit still for any bigotry That limits rights to the nuclear family.

N.Y. Rights Bill

Continued from page 1

campaign targeted at city council members. People who wish to get involved with CLGR's lobbying efforts can call Humm at (212) 302-0862.

The most active opposition to the bill is expected to come from Catholic and Orthodox Jewish groups. John Cardinal O'Connor, head of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, said at a January 12 press conference that he opposes the legislation because, as he sees it, it could turn "homosexuals" into an "exempt or preferred class." The Archdiocese, one of the city's largest employers and landowners, would be exempt from the law, and is exempt from all property taxes.

Joe Zwilling, a representative of the Archdiocese, claimed in a phone interview with *GCN* that the Cardinal has not transformed his personal opposition to the bill into any official church position. However, Zwilling admitted that the Cardinal has spoken with various Catholic lay organizations, and has urged them into action on "a multitude of public issues," including, but not limited to gay and lesbian liberation.

The seven-member general welfare committee is expected to consider Intro. 2 in early March. The bill is expected to pass out of committee easily, and onto the floor of the 35-member council, where it has 14 sponsors. An additional three

council members have committed themselves publicly to voting for the measure, while Humm says that two more have done so

privately. A bill requires at least an absolute majority (18 votes) to become law.

— filed from Boston

Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights (CLGR) spokesperson Andy Humm argues that the passage of Intro. 2 is not an "abstract issue." Humm said that although such a bill "would not revolutionize things," it is necessary to "stem a wave of anti-gay violence" and discrimination.

Below are some figures furnished by the New York City Commission on Human Rights to help make Humm's claims concrete.

Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in New York City from November 1983 through November 1985 as reported to the New York City Commission on Human Rights:

Discriminated in	# of cases
employment	143
housing	52
public accommodation	119
biased violence	187
AIDS-related	104
insurance	12
school	10
union	5
other	35
total	667

Documented cases of discrimination in all categories in New York City from November 1984 to October 1985 as reported to the New York Commission on Human Rights:

Discriminated on the basis of	% of total reported cases
sexual orientation	32.8
race	20.9
national origin	15.1
sex	9.3
other (including physical disability, age, and marital status)	21.9

Community Voices

Coordinating Editor

Gay Community News is currently accepting applications for the position of Coordinating Editor (available April-May 1986). We welcome inquiries about the job.

Responsibilities: Coordinate the paper's overall administrative, personnel, and financial affairs, and fundraising activities. Prepare editorial/letters pages. Serve as liaison between staff and board of directors, and as necessary, serve as paper's spokesperson. **Qualifications:** Strong administrative, organizational, and interpersonal skills. Familiarity with *Gay Community News* helpful. All *GCN* positions require a commitment to gay/lesbian liberation, feminism, anti-racist and anti-classist politics, and the collective decision-making process.

Salary/Benefits: \$160/week + fully paid health/life insurance, sick leave, and four weeks' paid vacation. All *GCN* positions offer staff members responsibility for their own jobs, with some flexibility and ample room for innovation.

To apply, please send resume and cover letter A.S.A.P. to: Search Committee, *GCN*, 167 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111.

Lesbians and gay men of color are particularly encouraged to apply.

it's not the sex, it's the morality

Dear *GCN*:

Re: Peg Lorenz' letter "Wake Up and Get Angry" *GCN* 1/18, I would anonymously like to share my thoughts on the subject of the foster care policy. As a gay man I have been confronted with this issue personally and have come to understand the reluctance of non-gays to support homosexuals who wish to adopt children. I do not believe that at this point in time, in this area of the country, the major factor that isolates us as a minority from mainstream society is our sexual preference. I believe that the critical factor here is one of essential morality. Having been openly homosexual for nearly 10 years now I have grown to recognize a basic lack of moral values in a disturbingly large degree of our population. I've heard this come up time and again from heterosexuals and have been hard put to give any semblance of an argument in favor of the moral character of the general gay population in this country. This is not to say that there are not healthy, motivated, and focused homosexuals with child-rearing ability; I'm simply stating the fact that we are largely perceived as hedonistic, non-committal, and yes, already "angry" by many of those who don't know us, and even among our ranks. I know very few homosexuals who are fit to be parents.

There are two important issues here. The first, and most important is the welfare of the children. It is the responsibility of the state to seek and find the most promising situation for a child. This includes: a loving, nurturing home life with stable and acceptable role models. These are children who have already endured disappointing and unacceptable developmental conditions. Secondly, is our issue. I agree that each applicant should be screened individually for consideration as a parent, not on the basis of sexual preference. But the answer is not anger, and it's not apathy either. We are a minority seeking acceptance and consideration in the wider society. This is not going to happen by stealing a statue of Jesus in a manger scene and leaving a clever note. Nor will it be achieved by marching in the streets in leather, drag, chains, fish net over-flying-tits or any other get up. It will not be accomplished by hung-over bar rags, hustlers, shallow queens, or angry dykes. What's left? A minority in the minority.

Our own media, locally and nationally rarely excludes articles or photos of explicit and very basic sexual enticements or strong innuendos of the same. There is a disturbing lack of commitment, among gay men particularly. What is the message that we are sending to the straight community? If it's "take us as we are" or "I am what I am" — don't hold your breath. There are too many people like me within our own community who are disgusted with what's going on; don't expect the wider community, government or general population to come to your way of thinking.

I am a qualified and seasoned critic of this issue having been closely associated with many lesbians and gay men (socially, sexually, politically) for years. So hear it from one of your own: it's time to wake up and get *respectable*. In a society such as ours, a minority has to earn respect not demand it.

Anonymous
Framingham, MA

dworkin v. hustler

Dear *GCN*:

I am writing in reference to the interview with Andrea Dworkin in your 12/28-1/4 issue. According to a recent article in the *New York Times*, Dworkin is suing *Hustler* for \$150 million for portraying her in cartoons as a lesbian. I never considered being called a lesbian a \$150 million insult. Why wasn't Dworkin questioned on this?

Sincerely,
Anne I. Seidel
Hoboken, NJ

(Features editor Loie Hayes notes: Andrea Dworkin tells us she is suing Hustler not because the cartoons portray her as a lesbian but because they are otherwise offensive.)

old testament claptrap?

Dear *GCN*:

These are my thoughts on reading "Being Jewish at Christmas" by Alina Ever and Bonnie Wolf:

How can a woman be a Jew?

In fact, how can a caring, principled human male be a Jew, since the religion is based on genocide? The founders of this religion slaughtered the inhabitants of their "promised," "holy" land because "Moses" or "God" told them to do it. A Christianity that doesn't reject the whole claptrap of the Old Testament Bible is a mockery. The birthday I celebrate at Christmas is that of a man who brought a revolutionary message of powerful psychological insight — love thy enemies. The message has been mostly perverted from the moment of his death, but it hasn't been invalidated. So, viva Jesus of Nazareth and joy to the world!

Emma Whitby
Philadelphia, PA

The GCN staff notes: It is our policy that all letters to GCN, except those involving personal attacks, run unedited. An editorial by GCN's staff on anti-Jewish sentiment in the gay/lesbian community will appear on these pages next week.

exit, stage right

Dear *GCN*:

Concerning Andrea Dworkin's statement quoted on the cover of the 12-28-85/1-4-86 issue: it's fine with me if she wants to leave the "movement." The sooner the better, as a matter of fact. I've often wondered if she wasn't really an agent provocateur in the employ of the FBI or some organization of the reactionary right.

Pornography is not the real issue, abuse is. If Ms. Dworkin were serious, she would admit that this is the real thrust of her argument. Instead, she regularly slanders women and proposes prohibitive and censorial legislation. Any thinking person can see from the recent history of similar laws that such legislation would be at least ineffective and most probably will have disastrous consequences. Such laws will also be a harsh and perhaps irreparable blow to our guaranteed rights.

If there are abuses in the pornography industry, then we should work to eradicate them. Indiscriminate curtailing of rights is not the way of people who struggle in the fight for human liberation. We must tell those who pose as our friends, as well as those who are our open foes, "KEEP YOUR LAWS OFF OUR BODIES!!"

In the Human Struggle,
K.L. Ratliff
Mountain View, CA

Defense Committee Update

A coordinating committee meeting will be held Tuesday, February 11 at 7:30 p.m. at 67 Pleasant St. in Cambridge. New members are particularly welcome. An orientation for new members will be held at 7:00.

The Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee has announced the formation of a defense fund to pay the legal costs of the lesbians and gay men recently arrested in the State House. The GLDC estimates that at least \$2-3,000 will be needed initially. The defense fund will be ongoing, because the struggle will continue and future arrests are likely to occur.

Send checks made out to the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee (or GLDC) to: PO Box 225, West Somerville, MA 02144. Your support in these critical times is essential. Thank you.

'lesbian' is deeply sexist

Dear *GCN*:

June 27th will mark the 17th year of the Stonewall Riots, when a group of largely effeminate gay men stood solidly up for their civil liberties as Americans. These gentlemen launched into public consciousness the Gay Liberation Movement.

Probably few Americans exist today who are unaware of Gay Liberation. Although gay men and women are still hated and feared by some segments of the American population, we have generally won recognition from educated heterosexual men and women as an authentic social, cultural and sexual minority. These thoughtful Americans realize that the days of a closeted gay community decidedly belong to a long-gone past.

In the ever-going struggle to eradicate both external and internalized homophobia from the lives of both homosexual and heterosexual men and women, however, an extremely undesired linguistic custom has taken root among ourselves as gay persons and among heterosexual men and women.

To liberate the Gay Liberation Movement from any taint of sexism, gay men and women foolishly developed the habit of constantly speaking of and writing about "gay and lesbian this" or "gay or lesbian that."

This continuous use of the word "lesbian" has the tragic effect upon spoken and written standard English of genderizing "gay" (and "homosexual") into meaning "of or pertaining to a homosexual man."

If anybody doubts this, just pick up any newspaper article concerning the gay community. One will usually find therein the constant repetition of the dual identities "gay and lesbian." This linguistic habit has become a Tweedle Dum and a Tweedle Dee.

As a co-equal community of men and women, we have been grossly stupid linguistically. We have segregated ourselves into "gays" and "lesbians."

We have violated logic because, by definition, any person who possesses a psycho-sexual orientation towards persons of his or her own gender is either a homosexual man or a homosexual woman.

Although we are rightly defined separately by our sexual identities as "men" or "women," we are jointly defined as a single social minority by our sexual orientation. Our sexual identities always remain as "men" or "women," but that reality in no way excludes a simultaneous possession of a joint homosexual orientation.

In his monumental research into the sexual behavior of men and of women 30-odd years ago, Alfred E. Kinsey documented that human sexuality is not a dichotomy between exclusive heterosexuality and exclusive homosexuality, but that it is a continuum between these two parameters. Although most humans lie somewhere between these two parameters, about 10 percent of men and about 4.5 percent of women are "more or less" exclusively homosexual in their sexual desires and behaviors. These are the Kinsey 5's and 6's on his continuum scale.

Kinsey concluded, however, that no reality of human sexuality was served by the conceptualization of the words "homosexual" and "heterosexual" as nouns. He urged that the sole legitimate linguistic use of these two words was as adjectives.

Yet today, both ourselves and heterosexual persons usually persist in linguistically defining non-heterosexual persons as "homosexuals," "gays," or, if women, "lesbians."

Such linguistically-defining nouns are symbolically dehumanizing. We have tragically allowed ourselves to be defined in terms of our essence as human beings, by our sexual orientation, instead of by our several identities as "men" or "women."

As gay men and gay women, we desperately need to get our linguistic act together. We need to discard the word "lesbian" because it is deeply sexist and thus linguistically segregates gay men from gay women as jointly homosexual persons. We need to demand of ourselves and from heterosexual persons our rightful dignity as co-equal human beings by repossessing for ourselves the simple co-equal human identities of "men" or "women." We need to develop the habit of constantly speaking of and writing of ourselves as "gay men," "gay women," "homosexual women," "homosexual men," etc.

These linguistic ideals can only be concretely realized if gay women begin to see that their separate sexist embrace of the identity "lesbian" is out of joint with the all-embracing goals of the Gay Liberation Movement.

Respectfully yours,
James F. Gibbons
San Leandro, CA

GCN welcomes letters to the editor. If possible, they should be TYPED and DOUBLESPACED, and where possible limited to five typed pages. They should be sent to: Community Voices, GCN, 167 Tremont St. #5, Boston, MA 02111.

GayCommunityNews

Cover design by Ina Cohen

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of eleven, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership. The paper is published weekly (except a week in December and a week in August) by the Bromfield Street Education Foundation, Inc., a non-profit corporation.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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Speaking Out

A Response to Andrea Dworkin

By Priscilla Alexander

The interview with Andrea Dworkin in the December 28/January 4 issue of *GCN* made me want to cry. And it is hard to know where to begin. First, perhaps, I should say where I think Dworkin and I agree: we both want to stop violence against women. We both would like to see an end to the idea that violence against women is entertaining — the list of movies and television programs I choose not to see, because of the gratuitous violence against women who scream helplessly in terror, is longer than the list of those I want to see. We even agree that women who are beaten or sexually assaulted in the production of pornography (or, I would add, any other film, video-cassette, or photograph), should have a right to sue and to obtain an injunction to stop the distribution and sale of that which was produced through violence. However, our agreement stops there. Dworkin supports legislation dealing with *content*. I don't. Instead, I support legislation dealing with the *action*, that is, the sexual assault itself, whether or not the work produced depicts sexual activity.

But there is more. Dworkin distinguishes between the *prostitute* who does a job (I didn't know she was that aware) and the *whore*, who she defines as "somebody who is designated as the village slut." I have long thought that Dworkin and MacKinnon have internalized the patriarchal meaning of the word *whore*, and use the word to judge women just as men have done. Her use of the term *slut* is the same. Dworkin cannot conceive of women as actors who choose to be sexual with a variety of partners and still feel good about themselves. The promiscuous woman is, in Dworkin's mind, either a victim of rape, in which case she is *good*, or a volitional *whore* or *slut*, in which case she is *bad*.

Whores, hookers, prostitutes, my sisters who engage in sex in exchange for money or other consideration, are working hard to remove the stigma from those words, to get the world to understand that sexual work is legitimate, and that they, who do the work, are moral, compassionate, committed human beings deserving of respect. And Dworkin wants to divide them — like others who divide *good* prostitutes, who work indoors, from *bad* prostitutes who work on the streets. Dworkin needs to understand that the meaning of the word *whore* is in the eye of the beholder, and the phrase "treated like a whore" can mean treated with respect, as a professional, as much as it can mean treated with contempt. Yes, there are men who rape whores, and there are police and district attorneys who refuse to prosecute men who rape whores, and there are women who sit on juries and believe that saying the woman was a whore/prostitute is a legitimate defense to the charge of rape. I charge that Dworkin is perpetuating that assumption by her use of the word *whore*.

Dworkin says her law would not affect those women who choose to work in pornography, or who enjoy their work. She obviously has little understanding of how the laws work in this society. In California, a few years ago, the legislature almost unanimously passed a law increasing the penalty for pimping and pandering, and making the sentences mandatory, whether or not coercion was proven. Guess who is going to jail under that law, which was supported by every woman and almost all of the men who are *good* on feminist issues? Women. Women who work together. Women who help other women find a customer, even when no money is exchanged or even discussed. Judges, the same class of people who will preside in the courts where Dworkin and MacKinnon's law would be used, are denying women who work together probation because of that law. And any woman who runs a successful prostitution business (especially a woman other women like to work for) is bound to be set up and arrested. The white men who own and operate prostitution businesses (even where the women employees are treated badly), are rarely arrested. Even those pimps who are violent rarely are the target. Or another example: a number of states have passed laws mandating in domestic violence that if there is any evidence of injury the batterer must be arrested and taken to jail. Well, in Las Vegas, who gets taken to jail? The women, again. If there is any evidence that the woman fought the man — say, his shirt is torn or there is a scratch on his face, the woman is arrested. And San Francisco NOW recently received a phone call from a woman who had been arrested for prostitution in Las Vegas who said the jail was full of battered women.

We live in a misogynist society. A society with misogynist police. And judges and juries can be a misogynist as the worst police officer or the worst producer of pornography. Dworkin and MacKinnon will not be in court to monitor the utilization of their ordinances. They may think that "nothing in this law...stops [women who choose to pose for lesbian erotica, for example] from doing that for each other." But the law will not be in their hands, it will be in the hands of judges, few of whom are women, fewer of whom are feminists, and juries from which thinking, progressive, aware people are routinely excluded.

Dworkin believes that FACT members are organizing to hurt women, to stop women who have been hurt by pornography from getting what they deserve in this society. And she takes it personally. Well, so do I. I am a member of FACT in San Francisco. I have also been working in COYOTE since 1976, and in NOW since 1979, to end the brutal oppression of women who engage in sex for money or other consideration. The beatings by customers and police, the rapes, the murders (currently 32 official murders in Seattle, 11 in Los Angeles, four in Oakland, not to mention the enormous number of females, as well as males, who have been murdered in Atlanta). I am working as hard as I can to keep prostitutes from being blamed for a spread of AIDS into the heterosexual (read white male) population that is a fantasy (to date, 28 men in this country have gotten AIDS from women, 151 women, on the other hand, have gotten it from men). I, and my sisters who work on AIDS, and my sisters who work with prostitutes, and my sisters who are prostitutes, and my brothers who are gay, are trying to prevent the quarantining of people with AIDS. And in each city where a quarantine has been proposed, the excuse is that there is a prostitute with AIDS who refuses to stop working.

Never mind the lack of funding so that she won't have to work, or job training, or care or compassion because the poor woman has this horrible, painful, terrifying disease and is going to die. Never mind that what most prostitutes do, in the first place, hand jobs and blow jobs, is unlikely to allow the transmission of the AIDS virus. Never mind that they use condoms routinely *unless* the customer refuses and they are too desperate for money to argue. No, quarantine the women, the whores no one cares about anyway. Who the hell is Andrea Dworkin to say that she cares about these women and that the women who are members of FACT, the women who oppose her puritanical and neo-fascistic piece of legislation, do not? Many of the women in FACT are also working for the repeal of prostitution laws, which will do far more than the anti-pornography ordinances will ever do to help the women in the industry. In fact, the ordinances may only compound the abuse. Since the introduction of the ordinances, police have begun using prostitution laws to arrest women who work in pornography.

And about the First Amendment, I listened to Andrea Dworkin speak in Sacramento, a month or so ago. And a major point of her speech was that although she did not believe her ordinance would violate the First Amendment, ultimately she did not care because she, as a woman was not covered by it. That the First Amendment was drafted by white, male plantation owners, and that it was not meant to cover the speech of Blacks or women. That she did not have enough money to own a major newspaper, as men did, and therefore she had no First Amendment rights (confusing democracy and capitalism in the last instance). But in any event, what does she think protects her right to speak, as she does, at forums all over the country, without going to jail? What guarantees the right of *GCN* to publish what it chooses to publish, including a lengthy interview with Dworkin? The same First Amendment that has allowed me to speak at rallies, publish articles in newspapers, speak on talk shows on radio and television, lecture college classes, and write letters to the editor, without being arrested and jailed. That some media includes all the points I make (including discussions of condoms and spermicides), while others do not, is part of the right of free press. The government is *not* censoring me, nor am I taken off to jail. On the other hand, the government's refusal to fund educational materials that include explicit information about safe sex *is* censorship.

The First Amendment is very precious to me. As precious as the lives of the women for whom I work, day in and day out, because my freedom to determine the nature of my sexuality, my work, and my life is dependent on their ability to determine the terms of their sexual encounters, *without fear of arrest, prosecution, and jail*.

Finally, on the relationship between the ACLU and *Playboy*, on the one hand, and the ACLU and FACT, on the other: I understand that *Playboy* has given money to the ACLU over the years for its much-needed work to keep abortion legal and funded. If they have ever provided the ACLU with rent-free space, so did the Times Square developers provide space to Women Against Pornography at one time. Bay Area FACT meets in the ACLU conference room, in San Francisco, as does the Northern California Pro-Choice Coalition. Both feminist groups are grateful for the space. Photocopying, postage, and other expenses are paid by contributions from FACT members and the sale of buttons and literature.

Priscilla Alexander is education coordinator for COYOTE, the San Francisco-based organization that works for the rights of prostitutes and the repeal of the prostitution laws. For more information, COYOTE's mailing address is P.O. Box 26354, San Francisco, CA 49126. Their phone number is (415) 552-1849.

"Speaking Out" is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings, and comments to us and we encourage you to respond to any ideas expressed in this space. Submissions to "Speaking Out" should be TYPED and DOUBLE SPACED, and, if possible, held to under 5 pages in length. The *GCN* staff collective reserves the right to limit length and number of signatures in "Speaking Out." The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper, the staff, or the advertisers. Write c/o Speaking Out, *GCN*, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111.

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pugraphic 7500 Editwriter, and strong organizational, interpersonal, and recordkeeping skills with attention to detail. Familiarity with *GCN* and local progressive movements helpful.

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Gay men and lesbians of color particularly encouraged to apply.

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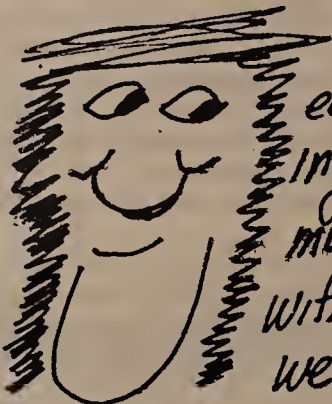
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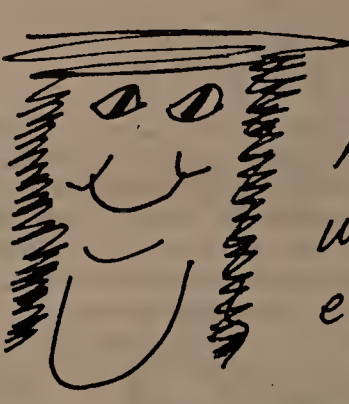
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Young lesbian streetperson killed in Seattle

Lou Ellen Couch: A Personal Tribute

By Pat M. Kuras

It is not often that television's national news gives attention to the death of a 22-year-old lesbian. The Dan Rather report I saw last December never mentioned Lou Ellen Couch's sexuality but, if you had seen the film *Streetwise*, you'd know about her.

Streetwise, a documentary released last spring, focused on teenagers who lived on Seattle's streets, surviving in a world of panhandling and petty theft, prostitution and violence. The film had no narrator or guide and there were no questions addressed to the people it profiled. This may have been the film's only problem. One wanted to know more about the

lives of the film's young subjects. Basically, the camera followed the street people as they went about their daily lives.

Lou Ellen Couch, or Lulu as she preferred to be called, was only one of many shown in the film. She was the blonde with the gruff voice. She wore a pink hooded sweatshirt and an Alcatraz cap. She was 19 years old when *Streetwise* was filmed.

Her short life was filled with tragedy. When she was 7 months old, her father tried to stab her because he thought his infant daughter was Black. Lulu's mother brought the family to Seattle and raised the children by

herself. Lulu came from a large family and, for much of the time, they lived on welfare. In an interview with *Streetwise* producer Cheryl McCall, Lulu spoke proudly about her mother: "...she's done her best. She's got blood disease and she can't do too much for us anymore."

When she was 13, Lulu was raped and badly beaten. Her vocal cords were permanently damaged from the battering. At 14, she ran away from home and became a central figure on Seattle's street scene. She learned how to survive on the streets and developed an aggressive style. She protected herself and friends, as can be noted in this anecdote she related to McCall: "This bum was tryin' to feel a friend of mine's chest. And I literally walked up to him and made him come back and apologize to the girl, and tell him not to touch her no more because she's not public property."

While she seemed tough and unafraid, Lulu was also gentle and compassionate. In a scene from *Streetwise*, she helped paramedics aid an injured girl.

Lulu got in many fights and brawls but, as she told McCall, she knew when to call it quits. "I can say I sometimes start a fight," Lulu said. "Yeah, but I won't start a fight with somebody [when] I know I'm gonna get my ass kicked. I'll walk away from those ones."

Lulu protected the younger and weaker kids. She also encouraged, sometimes commanded, young runaways to return home. Lulu

had dropped out of school and later briefly attended an alternative school. About her student days, she told McCall, "I never got a A. Never. I, my best grade was a B-plus. And that was in PE..." She confided to McCall that she would like to be a counselor for teenagers, to tell them that life on the streets "ain't worth it." But she was overwhelmed by the thought of going to college, mainly for economic reasons. "I don't know how to pay for it," she said.

Streetwise had Lulu in two remarkable scenes: one dealt with alcoholism, another with Lulu's identity as a lesbian. In one scene Lulu discussed the death of her older sister, who died from cirrhosis of the liver at the age of 26. What made the scene so moving

was that Lulu spoke so matter-of-factly, honestly and without self-pity. Lulu was not without her own alcohol and drug problems. She had been detoxed a number of times and, less than 24 hours before her death, she had been released from jail — having been sentenced for public drinking and possession of marijuana. Lulu had a lengthy police record, with arrests ranging from "drunk and disorderly" to "assaults."

Early in the film, Lulu proudly declared her lesbianism. I don't remember the words verbatim, but I do remember the tone. Lulu spoke with the same unabashed pep a child would use, say, in announcing her favorite flavor of ice cream. She said something like:

Continued on page 12



Lulu Couch (right) and a friend, Dawn, on the streets of Seattle.

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Gay & Lesbian Print Disabled The Issue is Access



By Warren Blumenfeld

"Restricted access" is a condition which has great significance to those with physical differences. Wheelchair users are restricted entry into many structures and public facilities by architectural barriers. Until fairly recently, deaf people had use of their language (American Sign Language or "AMESLAN") denied them under the guise of being helped to fit into a hearing world. Popular philosophy once dictated that left-handed children have their dominant hand bound behind them to develop a side which intrinsically goes against their nature. In addition, blind and other print-disabled people have been prevented from obtaining the information they need for a broad understanding of life's options.

Access has also been an issue for gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals. As members of a sexual minority, information pertaining to our history and culture has been systematically withheld or altered. For those who happen to fall into the dual categories of "sexual minority" and "print disabled," the problem of restricted information acquisition is compounded substantially.

It is estimated that there are upwards of three million print-disabled people in the United States: 1.6 million with visual defects and the remainder with physical or perceptual disabilities making it difficult to read ink print. Taking the Kinsey research findings, statistically there exists close to 300,000 gay men and lesbians with print disabilities.

As lesbians and gay men, we know how long and difficult can be the journey of coming to terms with our sexuality — a journey nearly impossible to travel alone. Support for others who have already walked the path is critical. Needed also is free and open access to positive information which tells our stories and shows us that in no way are we unique. How common it is now for many of us to glance through gay and lesbian periodicals at newsstands or to borrow library books on these themes. Some of us browse through bar guides or local calendar listings before deciding on an evening's entertainment. Once outside, we see the most recent patchwork of colorful street posters announcing gay meetings and dances.

However, print-disabled people often cannot use these materials, and the reasons are not necessarily physical. Further blocking their path out to accessibility is society's three-pronged attack on their privacy, confidentiality, and independence.

From birth, most disabled people are sheltered by family and friends. They are constantly monitored by social, governmental, and school officials. On the matter of sexuality, at one residential school outside of Boston for children with visual disabilities, an administrative decision was made calling for the deletion of all references to homosexuality in its *Sex Education and Family Life* curriculum. Said one department supervisor, "The students are different enough, and we don't need to teach them to stick out any further."

Though mainstreaming disabled students into public schools is quickly becoming the pedagogical norm, issues remain. With the additional "special" teachers and readers hired to aid disabled students with their academic and emotional transition, some of the apparent gains are often diminished by a loss of privacy. Print-disabled people must often depend on designated readers to read

them letters and other printed materials. Rather than risking possible disclosure or embarrassment, they may choose not to seek out information of a personal or private nature, including information on homosexuality.

There exists today a general societal abhorrence of gay and lesbian sexuality, combined with an enormous ignorance of the varieties of sexual expression of disabled people. The mere fact that disabled people "do it" is, to many, unimaginable at best, and at worst, repulsive. Literature and popular culture have tended to exaggerate these attitudes. Disability and deformity have traditionally been presented as symbols of evil or corruption on one hand, or purity, innocence, and spirituality on the other, but invariably they are presented as sexless. From Dr. Strangelove and Captain Ahab to the Elephant Man and the blind master on TV's *Kung Fu*, each is outside the realm of sexuality. Who would take seriously the notion of any of those seven little people actually sleeping with Snow White (or, for that matter, with the prince)? Nicholas Nickleby's disabled friend, Smike, may be wise, but Dickens delivers him lacking sex parts.

A lack of understanding, however, is not limited to the able-bodied. Mirroring majority sentiment, acceptance of homosexuality has been slow in coming from the general print-disabled community. There remains continued resistance to dealing openly with this issue by a significant segment of the press serving print-disabled people. Many of the traditional publications for this group have consistently refused to carry ads announcing gay and lesbian organizations, events, or publications, or have severely restricted how these ads must be worded (preferring the term "alternative lifestyles" over "gay" or "lesbian"). Also, the powerful National Federation of the Blind (NFB), the largest and most vocal private organization leading the fight for the rights of blind people, has consistently refused to recognize groups designed to work for gay and lesbian blind people.

Recording Organizations

A library contains a galaxy of words which the print-disabled have a difficult, if not impossible, time navigating. They can't simply enter, independently search the card catalogue, locate a book amongst the stacks, and check it out at the circulation desk.

Today, for lesbian and gay print-disabled people, other options are available. Some of the traditional recording services are reproducing an increasing list of books on gay and lesbian themes, while alternative organizations have been founded to offer information on homosexuality and feminism and to help reduce some of the isolation that print-disabled people feel around these topics.

Before discussing these agencies, it is important to explore the area of eligibility. With each agency, requirements differ slightly, but the user must be print-disabled, and in some cases a written verification from a health care professional, social worker, or teacher is required.



L. GWINZDAK '85

Most materials distributed by agencies are in recorded formats, and some are in Braille. (Library of Congress statistics show that 85 percent of those eligible for these materials do not read Braille.) Materials produced by the recording organizations are produced on cassette tape or recorded disc, and therefore special playback equipment

is needed. Special tape players and turntables capable of playing at reduced speeds are required.

Traditional Agencies National Library Service

Marking its golden anniversary in October, 1984, the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) was established by an act of the U.S. Congress. Through a national network of over 170 regional and sub-regional libraries, recorded and Brailled materials are distributed to those who cannot manage print. Included in this free service are all playback equipment, specially formatted books, and the bimonthly *Talking Book Topics* and *Braille Book Review* listing recent books and magazines distributed by NLS.

Skilled professional readers are commissioned to record thousands of "talking books," which range from cookbooks to tax guides and from Harlequin romances to the classics. Periodicals are also recorded.

Also available is a fair amount of materials on gay and lesbian themes. For example, in fiction there are the Mary Renault tales of love and sacrifice set against the backdrop of ancient Greece, including *The Last of the Wine*, *Fire from Heaven*, and *The Persian Boy*. There are James Baldwin's accounts of homosexuality and relations between the races in *Giovanni's Room*, *Another Country*, and *Just Above My Head*. Biographies are available of such notables as Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein, W. H. Auden, Frederick the Great, and Oscar Wilde. There is Merle Miller's now-famous essay, "On Being Different," and intimate guides through the gay experience such as *Loving Someone Gay* by Donald Clark. On religion there is Rev. Troy Perry's *The Lord is My Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay*. There is Radclyffe Hall's early lesbian classic, *The Well of Loneliness*, as well as Gore Vidal's gay classic, *The City and the Pillar*, plus the popular *Consenting Adult* by Laura Hobson and *The Front Runner* by Patricia Nell Warren. For younger readers there is *Sticks and Stones* by Lynn Hall. Non-fiction political writings include *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*, *The Homosexual Matrix*, *Lesbian/Woman*, and *Sappho Was a Right-On Woman*, among others. On request, NLS will produce a computer print-out covering its complete listings of homosexual themes, which currently approximate 120 titles.

Though NLS is presently expanding its list of offerings on lesbian and gay themes, an important development recently occurred. The U.S. Congress, serving as chief NLS overseer, last year cut off funding for Braille issues of *Playboy* magazine. Marj Schneider, co-founder and current co-coordinator of the Womyn's Braille Press of Minneapolis considers this as a dangerous precedent. "Though I don't like *Playboy* myself," she said, "this indicates against that the government is trying to influence control over blind people reading about sex. It will have a dampening effect... Now there will be closer scrutiny in the future over books chosen [by NLS] for special format."

Recordings for the Blind

Serving a slightly different function from NLS is the New Jersey-based Recordings for the Blind (RFB). Started by a small group of women to record text books for returning blinded World War II vets, the organization has grown into a network of over 5,000 volunteer readers. Partly funded by governmental agencies, RFB receives most of its support from private donations, foundations, and corporations. Though the service is free, tape playback equipment must be purchased by a distributor or borrowed from the Library of Congress.

RFB distributes over 60,000 taped titles which increases at an estimated annual rate of 3,500. Similar to NLS which records standard non-fiction and fiction books, RFB provides the extra specialized service of recording textbooks and other academic materials on request. The subscriber need only send two print copies of the book to be recorded to RFB headquarters: one for the reader and the other for the monitor to follow along. The book is taped and returned within a few months. Copies are then made available to other subscribers.

RFB provides a good range of books on homosexuality. Though offering some of the same popular books on this topic as NLS, they go beyond by recording such non-fiction titles as Margaret Cruikshank's *Lesbian Studies: Present and Future*, Laud Humphrey's *Out of the Closets: The Sociology of Homosexual Liberation*, Jill Johnston's *Lesbian Nation*, *The Coming Out Stories* an anthology published by Persephone, and Allen Young's *Gays Under the Cuban Revolution*, plus books on poetry,

d: From birth, most disabled people are sheltered by family and friends. They are constantly monitored by social, governmental, and school officials. On the matter of sexuality, at one residential school for children with visual disabilities outside of Boston, an administrative decision was made calling for the deletion of all references to homosexuality in its *Sex Education and Family Life* curriculum. Said one department supervisor, "The students are different enough and we don't need to teach them to stick out any further."

drama, and literature.

RFB also distributes a substantial number of books dealing with other facets in the movement for sexual liberation including those covering feminism, bisexuality, and men's liberation. There are also a large array of materials dealing with other movement struggles. Such cross-over issues as racism, anti-Semitism, ageism, able-bodiedism, workers' oppression, militarism, imperialism, and classism are also available.

While much of the material recorded by NLS and RFB on the topic of homosexuality is relatively progressive, some is quite archaic and even prejudicial. Works such as *The Unhappy Gays* by Tim F. LaHaye and *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study* edited by the Society of Medical Psychoanalysis containing works by Irving Bieber, present a clear indictment of homosexuality. And there is Dr. David Reuben's now-infamous *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex* with its ridiculous chapter on homosexuality. (Lesbianism is given a mere two-page mention in a chapter on prostitution.) Also obvious in its bias is the RFB listing for *The Anita Bryant Story: The Survival of Our Nation's Families and the Threat of Militant Homosexuality*, written by Anita Bryant in 1977 at the height of her anti-gay crusade. Such materials as these might be fine for those interested in looking at the genesis of psychological theory on homosexuality within an historical framework or to engage in an academic exercise. But for those seeking affirmation and support for a lifestyle, these materials can cause unnecessary pain and distress.

Alternative Organizations

Since the early 1970s, there has been an explosion in the publishing of gay, lesbian, and feminist books and journals, and traditional agencies have begun making some of this accessible to print-disabled people. But the explosion is vast while their line is narrow.

Working to enrich and enlarge the body of specifically formatted materials on gay and feminist themes, a number of groups have stepped in to act as personal and confidential resources for information and support. Often run collectively by blind and sighted volunteers, these groups regard subscribers as peers rather than as clients.

According to Marj Schneider of the Womyn's Braille Press, "A major difference between us [alternatives]...and the 'agencies for the blind'...is that we are self-organized. That is, we are organized by blind people because we know what we need and want better than the 'professionals' do."

Lambda Resource Center for the Blind

Beginning with nothing more than some basic recording equipment and a small apartment to work from, the Lambda Resource Center for the Blind (LRC) was born in October, 1979. Today it has grown with the aid of a network of volunteer readers to provide a large collection of cassette books and a quarterly magazine to people all across the United States and parts of Canada. Lacking extensive funding sources, a minimal subscription fee for materials is requested.

Unique to LRC is their cassette magazine recorded quarterly comprising a composite of some of the best in gay and lesbian journalism. It is drawn from such publications as our own *Gay Community News*, Toronto's *Body Politic*, Chicago's *Gay Life*, *The Native* and *Christopher Street* from New York, *Gay Blade* from Washington, D.C., and California's *Advocate*, plus occasional articles on homosexuality taken from traditional press sources.

Pieces chosen for the *LRC Quarterly* cover such topics as trends in lesbian and gay culture, precedent-setting court decisions, in-depth news and analysis, personalities, travelogues, gay and lesbian history and lifestyles, plus arts and literature reviews. It also provides a "personals" section designed to develop an interchange among subscribers and those who may be interested in becoming readers for print-disabled people.

Recorded by a team of qualified volunteer readers, LRC provides, along with the *Quarterly*, an extensive selection of cassette books which range from sex manuals to novels. Other areas include short stories (*Below the Belt and Other Stories* by Phil Andros; non-fiction anthologies (*Pink Triangles: Radical Perspectives on Gay Liberation*, edited by Pam Mitchell, and *One Teenager in Ten: Writings of Gay and Lesbian Youth*, edited by Ann Heron); drama (*Torch Song Trilogy* by Harvey Fierstein); history (*Gay American History* by Jonathan Katz); and

autobiography/fiction *Down There On a Visit* by Christopher Isherwood). There are also books on religion, scholarship, personalities, travel, mystery, health, sociology, and relationships. In addition, LRC provides a recorded version of the *Gayellow Pages* which lists bars, churches, political groups, and social organizations for lesbians and gay men in the U.S. and Canada. New for distribution is an up-to-date annotated computer list of all gay and lesbian recorded and Braille books which are produced by agencies nationwide. A cassette bibliography listing LRC materials is available to individuals and libraries on request. To underscore its concern in protecting subscriber confidentiality, all LRC books are marked by number rather than by title when mailed.



LRC is currently undergoing organizational transition. The group's founders are attempting to turn over coordination to others who have a desire to continue and to expand the group's projects and activities. Anyone who may have such a desire should contact LRC.

Womyn's Braille Press

Sharing a common belief with LRC that print disabled people can best understand their needs and wants, the Womyn's Braille Press (WBP) is helping to make available more pieces to the informational jigsaw puzzle. Founded by six blind women who have long felt the frustration over not having sufficient access to good feminist and lesbian literature, WBP was established as a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation to provide materials to women (and to men interested in learning about feminism) who cannot read ink print and to aid in the education of non-disabled people to the capabilities of those who are physically challenged.

Materials are taped and some are available also in Braille. They are carefully chosen keeping the interests of all segments of the diverse women's community in mind. Examples of non-fiction include: *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* edited by Gloria Anzaldua and Cherrie Moraga; *Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology* edited by Evelyn Torton Beck; *A Daughter of Han: The Autobiography of a Chinese Working Woman* by Ida Pruitt; *Sandino's Daughters: Testimonies of Nicaraguan Women in Struggle* by Margaret Randall; *Out from Under: Sober Dykes and Our Friends*, edited by Jean Swallow.

WBP also considers the dissemination of materials on women's health issues to be a priority. Available is the nine-part *Health Resource Guides* by the National Women's Health Network.

Examples of literature listed in the WBP catalogue include *Lesbian Fiction: An Anthology*, edited by Elly Bulkin and Joan Larkin; the science-fiction tale *Daughters of a Coral Dawn* by Catherine V. Forrest; and the contemporary classic *Patience and Sarah* by Isabel Miller. Authors also include Jane Rule, Joanna Russ, May Sarton, Sheila Ortiz Taylor, and Alice Walker. Listings also cover a wide range of poetry by Jan Clausen, Judy Grahn, and Adrienne Rich, among others.

In addition to books, WBP also makes available several feminist and lesbian periodicals which can either be purchased or borrowed. These include the monthly *off our backs* and *Telewoman*, plus the quarterly *Sinister Wisdom*, *Womanspirit*, and *Lesbian Contradiction: A Journal of Irreverent Feminism*.

Radical Rose Recordings

From its base in Minneapolis comes a new blossom in the field of recording companies. Radical Rose Recordings (RRR) is making available what could be called lesbian and feminist radio shows. However, instead of being picked up over the airwaves, these shows come through the mail to homes and to women's bookstores across the country.

RRR produces live cassette recordings of women telling their stories. Materials include conference workshops, news, music, and "kitchen-table" conversations covering a variety of issues within lesbian and feminist culture.

Though a relatively new group, its list of materials is growing. Examples include *Jewish Lesbian Culture and Anti-Semitism in the Lesbian Community*, which is a live recording of a presentation given by Jewish lesbians in the Minneapolis area in 1983. It consists of personal stories of childhood and experiences of anti-Semitism, songs, and excerpts of lesbian writers. Also available is *Dykes Resist*, which includes accounts of lesbians fighting back against male violence; *I'm in Love with Lesbians*, an interview with singer/songwriter Maxine Feldman; and *Dyke Pioneers: Lesbian Songs* by Sidney Spinsten. Materials are available to all lesbians, and Braille labels will be included on request.

Conclusion

Today, as the closet door swings open wider, lesbian and gay print-disabled people are gaining greater access to information making their lives richer and more fulfilling than ever before. A steadily increasing amount of specially formatted materials are bringing them closer to gay/lesbian culture and community. However, discrimination in all its forms still exists while their realities continue to be shrouded in myth and misconception.

For people with print disabilities, access in the fullest sense is not achieved merely with the production of recorded or Braille books. Similarly, the construction of architectural ramps or the inclusion of sign language interpreters at public events will not of itself end the isolation of people with other forms of disability. True access will only come about when all people begin to understand and accept human diversity. Many people remain fearful and often irritated at those with physical disabilities because it brings to light their own mortality. Often a physical condition is not as disabling as are negative societal attitudes.

Reality counters the commonly held notion that the world is divided into two distinct and separate camps: those with physical disabilities and those without. More accurately, though, there are some people with physical limitations, the rest of the population is simply temporarily able-bodied.

Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, 1291 Taylor Street, NW, Washington, DC 20542. (800) 424-8567.

Recordings for the Blind, 20 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540. (609) 452-0606; WATS line for orders only (800) 221-4792 or (800) 221-4973 (8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Eastern Time).

Lambda Resource Center for the Blind, P.O. Box 2241, Chicago, IL 60690-2241. (312) 880-5722.

Womyn's Braille Press, Inc., P.O. Box 8475, Minneapolis, MN 55408. (612) 341-3114 or (612) 872-6806.

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Up-Front and Personal

By Larry Hitt

When friends tell me about their sordid one-night stands, I pretend to commiserate. But when they get around to that part about the morning after, it's obvious they've lost me. How do I avoid that awkward morning after? Simple. I leave the night before — do it and leave.

But lately it hadn't been working. I ran over my options. The Fens cruising ground was a frozen wasteland. I have never gone to the bars, and already I was tired of them. Anyway, it was time to try something new. Behavior that had seemed bold, even revolutionary, in the '70s had become déclassé by the '80s. Fun was out; meaningful was in.

I wasn't sure just what I wanted, but I knew what I didn't want. And I'd been getting it in spades. Not that I was hard to please. I would have settled for a decent man somewhere between a skateboard and the grave. I decided to try the personals.

Apparently, answering personal ads was a snap. A friend told me how it was done. "If they say they're sincere, I say I'm sincere," he said. "Sometimes, I throw in 'goodlooking' just for the hell of it."

But composing a personal took some thought. It should begin with a brief physical description. "Muscular" wouldn't do; there

had to be some truth in advertising. Perhaps "swimmer's build?" It sounded good, and no one had ever known what it meant.

A week later I was running down the street clutching nine letters. If only I had been preparing to open and read someone else's mail, my joy would have been complete.

I ripped open the first letter. "Dear Box," it began. "I can't get you out of my mind." I'd seen that movie. It didn't end well.

The next letter started out well: "I live in a Victorian house with eight fireplaces," but soon went downhill: "I have an encyclopedic mind." That gave me pause. I had

fun. I tossed it aside in disgust.

I poured a cup of tea and opened another letter. "I'm a fine human being — caring, supportive...." I had always thought you were supposed to wait for others to point those things out. And then you were supposed to demur. Apparently, hard-sell was strategy for the '80s. I had been born too late. I read on, "Give me a call. Be discreet. Sincerely, Jim." Be discreet! Two little words that make me want to rip off my clothes and dance on top of a table. Sorry, Jim. It would never work. I'm too old to be discreet.

I put down the final letter. It all ran together in my head — a jum-

I would have settled for a decent man somewhere between a skateboard and a grave. I decided to try the personals.

an encyclopedia and could always look it up. "Give me a call and let's get together for dinner. Sincerely, Bruce." I put Bruce in the "maybe" pile.

Next came a mimeographed form letter bristling with anatomical details. It sounded like

ble of dining out, pecs, and sincerity.

But one letter had stood out for its vagueness — a quality I've always admired. It was impossible to tell the size, shape, mentality, sex.... I decided to give it a try.

Continued on page 11

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Up-front and Personal

Continued from page 10

Three days later, it was sitting at my kitchen table eating chili.

"This chili needs something," he said, grinding crackers into the bowl. The crumbs sifted between his fingers and formed a little white mound on the carpet. The cat ran up and sniffed it. "Leave it," I said. "If she doesn't eat it, I will."

Between bowls of chili, he told me the haunting details of his sad life. I was lucky to have a cat — his was dead. When he ate all he wanted, he had a tendency to put on weight. And then there was the time he'd had to move from that apartment he liked. Sometimes, on cold mornings, his car wouldn't start. Why, only last week...

"But those are problems everyone has," I said. He shifted uneasily in his chair. "You're right," he said, his eyes filling with tears. "No one is happy."

"I am," I said.

That was a mistake. He got up from his chair, tilted my head back and shone the lamp straight in my face. "Say that again," he said. "Look me in the eye and say that."

"I'm happy," I said. "Happy. Happy. Happy."

"Why did you ask me to your apartment?" he said. "My psychiatrist told me that was a sign of dominance." His psychiatrist was wrong. I didn't want to

dominate him. I wanted to kill him.

He went back to the table and sat down. He was finishing his third bowl of chili. He was putting on his coat. He was gone.

I made a cup of strong black tea, wrapped up in the afghan, and stared out into space. I watched it grow dark. Then I got up, turned on the light, and found a pencil and a scrap of paper. "Dear Bruce," I began to write. "About those eight fireplaces..."

*I ripped open the first letter.
"Dear Box," it began. "I can't
get you out of my mind." I'd seen
that movie. It didn't end well.*

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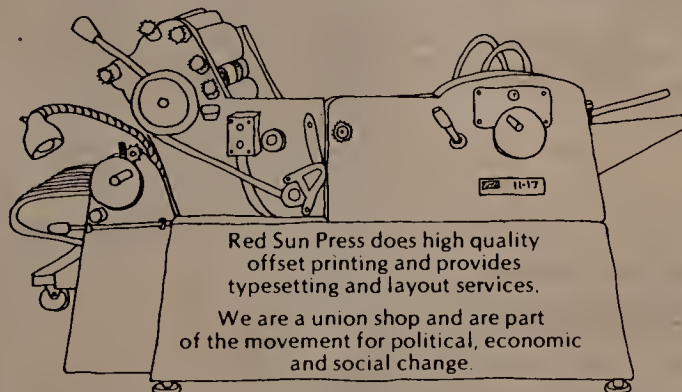
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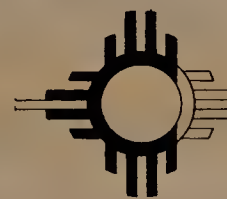
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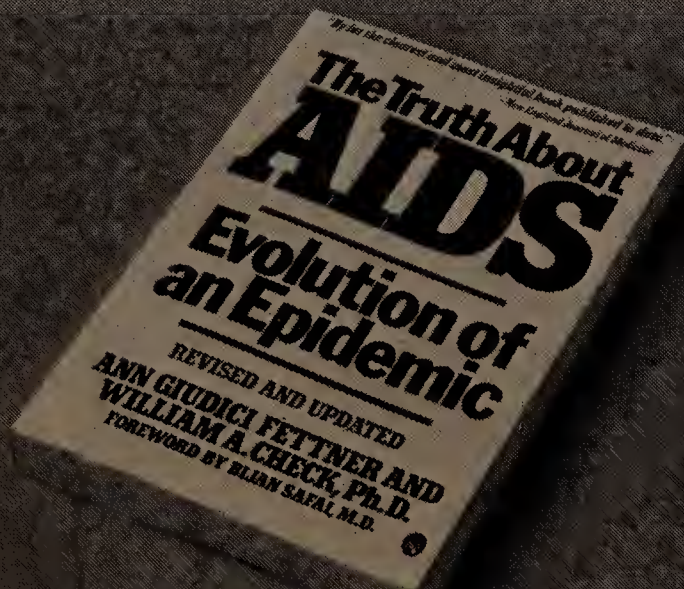


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North Station

Continued from page 3

No one from Mayor Flynn's office could be reached for comment.

While it is unclear to what extent homophobia has motivated the attempt to close down the theater, Charley Shively, a gay man who testified in favor of the theater, reported that homophobic

statements were made during the hearing. "One person [testifying against the theater] said they don't hate homosexuals, they just hate their sin," said Shively. "One Brookline woman said she was afraid that it [gay porn] was going to spread to Brookline."

The Licensing Division has up to forty-five days after the hearing to make a final decision on the matter.

GLAD Sues

Continued from page 1

Defense Committee, which has organized a number of actions protesting the foster care policy, said she was "really pleased that the plaintiffs have gone ahead with the lawsuit. These different approaches to challenging the policy complement one another." Firestone, who is a social worker, also stressed the importance of support by the NASW. "Social

workers are the major enforcers of this policy, but since individual social workers have been powerless, we've really relied on the NASW for support."

Speaking for the Executive Office of Human Services, spokesperson Mary Breslauer said state policy forbids discussing pending lawsuits, adding, "The suit will be defended as vigorously as any other against the Commonwealth."



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Lou Ellen Couch: Young Lesbian on the Streets

Continued from page 7

"Yeah, I'm gay. I like girls." And it was clear she didn't care who knew it.

Because she was so open about being a lesbian, Lulu was subjected to a great deal of abuse and harassment. *Streetwise* had a heartrending scene in which Lulu was in a ferocious shouting match with a homophobic young man who continually scorned her, telling her to "act like a girl." She stood toe-to-toe with him, bravely fighting back and attacking his sexism and homophobia.

The *Streetwise* scenes with Lulu were actually far and few between. Although the makers of this film

have provided us with a rare and dignified look at a young lesbian's life, I was left with many questions. I wondered if Lulu was at all involved with Seattle's lesbian and gay community. As a street person, had she reached out to them and, if so, was she welcomed? (Did she get any support from the gay community?)

"Lulu never lost her capacity to care which, it seems to me, is the first thing you lose on the streets."

With regards to her lesbianism, Lulu related this story to McCall. She remembered when she met Tiny, a young prostitute who was also featured in *Streetwise*. Lulu said, "When I first met Tiny ... she was standin' by these Christians and she found out I was a lesbian. She was only 11. And she literally ran from me. She made

me feel bad. I tell you I cried. She made me feel bad, like I was gonna rape her. I just told her that, uh, hey, I might be gay, but you're a little bit too young for me."

During the last four months of her life, Lulu's constant companion was Alwyn, a 16-year-old runaway girl. Although Lulu was drawn to the streets, she kept in touch with her family — she and Alwyn alternated their time living with Lulu's mother or her sister, Lisa. Then, of course, there was always the lure of the streets.

It would be presumptuous or middle-class bigotry to speculate why Lulu was so drawn to the

street scene. The circumstances leading to her death were typical of the anti-lesbian harassment she endured daily. She and Alwyn were in Seattle's sex business district, a place of peep shows and strip joints. A group of four men began to heckle them. They reportedly chided Alwyn for being with Lulu. Lulu told them to leave her alone, saying that Alwyn was her girl. A shoving match erupted and, when the men refused to disperse, Lulu grabbed a garbage can and hurled it at them. Three of them ran away while the fourth made advances towards Alwyn. Lulu retrieved the lid of the garbage can and, as she raised it over her head to use as a weapon, the man lunged at her and stabbed her once in the chest. Witnesses claim that Lulu was stunned by the attack, apparently unaware that the man had had a knife. She died within minutes. (Two nights after her death, a suspect was arrested.)

On December 17, a memorial service for Lulu was held at a downtown Seattle church. It was this event that drew national attention to Lulu's death. About 300 people attended, including *Streetwise* producer Cheryl McCall. McCall eulogized Lulu saying, "She never lost her capacity to care which, it seems to me, is the first thing you lose on the streets. Perhaps we may never meet another like her."

Lulu was a tough protector but those who knew her were aware of her vulnerability and loneliness, which she expressed in poetry she wrote. When I saw her in *Streetwise*, I was moved by her compassion and candor. She was a proud woman with courage and integrity and I admired her strength I mourn her passing.

(Grateful acknowledgement is given to Cheryl McCall for permission to reprint from her interview and to reporter Hill Williams of The Seattle Times for providing me with information regarding Lulu's death and memorial service. — PMK)

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R.O.S.I. (Remember Our Sisters Inside) is a network for publishing the artwork of women prisoners. They publish posters, postcards, stationery, etc. They are actively seeking other women to work with: inside and out. ROSI, 2000 Center St. No. 1077, Berkeley CA 94704.

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(13/32)

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I'm a 'Purple Perv' Dyke into S/M, B/D, porno and "women" only. I need some "freaky" ladies to write me; ladies who love spanking, "leather & lace." I'm a 32 yr old Butch Dyke, been in prison 7 1/2 yrs. I'm open for anything to please a foxy lady. (I can't correspond with prisoners.) Robyn Shawnee JACKSON, Box A, 600728A, G unit — 5, Oakdale IA 52319.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR!

Prisoners have as much right as anyone to write letters to the editors of their local newspapers. Take advantage of this right to write local papers (if you have the postage) regularly even tho they don't always publish them. Don't be bashful. You CAN express yourselves. Write about prison conditions, AIDS, health care, job training, housing, need for coming out (of prison) support, etc etc etc! GO FOR IT! (Outside folks aren't going to change their minds if you don't 'educate' them...)



I'd like to make some new friends among gay men and lesbians out there. I'm one who cares about people. Try me and see. My interests are camping and the outdoors, reading and making new friends. I can receive mail from other prisoners. James R. CONE (Jamie), 277249 Cedar G-1, PO Box 900, Shelton WA 98584.

My name is George but my friends call me Tammy. In sex I enjoy oral and anal sex and foreplay (kissing, caressing, etc). I'd like to correspond with some other gays. Will answer all but because of lack of funds (only get 2 free letters a week) the letters with SASE will be answered most promptly. George F. WATERMAN Jr., 090837, PO Box 1500 (Box 934), Cross City FL 32628.



WOMEN IN PRISON!!

Through The Looking Glass, a quarterly women's prison newsletter, wants to hear from you. Share information, opinions, thoughts, feeling, artwork, etc. with each other, and help create the connections needed by all of us. TTLG, PO Box 22061, Seattle, WA 98122.



POETS! POETS!!

Send you anti-authoritarian poetry, in any style, traditional to punk/reggae lyrics, that scrumptiously attack racism, ageism, lesbian & gay oppression or any of the other nasty power trips we have to put up with, to SEDITIOUS DELICIOUS, PO Box 6981, New York, NY 10150.



PRISON ARTISTS!!!

We need graphics! About the width of the columns in this section and done in black ink on white paper. Things that could illustrate the kinds of pieces in the "Freedom's Just" space that runs now and then, and things for this penpal space. Don't send anything you want sent back (we just don't have money for postage), and we can't promise to put everything we get in immediately, but we'd like to have this space illustrated by prisoners themselves so don't be bashful. Get out your pens and draw out those feelings and thoughts and let us see them. Thanks.

CALENDAR

February 1 to February 13

february 1 saturday

Dorchester — Wallflower Order Dance Collective presents "Crossfire" to benefit the Pledge of Resistance. Strand Theatre, 543 Columbia Rd. 8PM. \$8, \$10, \$12 & \$25 (sponsors). Info: 497-9311.

Newtonville — Janis Sommers, Irene Hall & Alix Dobkin to perform. 27 Jenison St. 4-8PM. \$20 minimum donation. Info: 965-0648.

Waltham — Informal social group. Windsor Village. 7:30PM-midnight. Info: 647-1193.

Waltham — The Support Committee for Battered Women volunteer training. Goes through 2/12. Info: 891-0724.

Brighton — Three Sisters, performed by Double Edge Theater. Church of Sts. Luke & Margaret, 40 Brighton Ave. 8PM. \$8. Playing through March 1. Info: 254-4228.

2 sunday

Providence, RI — The Yukon Trading Company Fundraising Tea Dance to benefit Rhode Island's Gay Help Line. 123 Snow St. 7-11PM. \$1.

Boston — Gay/Lesbian Speakers Bureau potluck. Boston YWCA, 140 Clarendon St., Rm. 707. 5:30PM. Potluck: A-G, Salad; H-N, Main Dish; O-Z, Dessert. Info: 354-0133.

Cambridge — Feminist poetry reading to benefit *Focus*, literary journal for D.O.B. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 2-5PM. \$3. Featuring: Veronica Cunninham, Nita Penfold and Patricia Roth.

Dorchester — GALA monthly potluck at Bill & John's. 7:30PM. Info: 288-4367 or 288-9155.

3 monday

Boston — GCN potluck supper and membership meeting. Critique the paper & plan for its future. All welcome. 167 Tremont St. 6-9PM. Info: 426-4469.

Cambridge — "A Tribute to Julian Beck," with Rain House and friends of the Living Theatre. Charlie's Tap, 280 Green St., Central Sq. 9PM. \$3.

4 tuesday

Cambridge — Coming Out group. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-9:30PM. Info: 354-8807.

Cambridge — A history of women's cinema. Weekly film showings by the Harvard Film Archive. Carpenter Center, 24 Quincy St. \$2. Info: 495-4700.

Boston — Boston Women's Fund volunteer open house. 31 St. James Ave., 9th Floor. 7:30PM. Info: Stephanie Borns, 542-5955.

Cambridge — Former Nun lesbian support group. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7PM. Info: 354-8807.

Boston — Rainbow Coalition Gay/Lesbian Council. 7:30PM. Info: Bruce or Patrick, 424-6989.

Boston — Legacy, a drop-in social for lesbian and gay elders. Clarendon St. YWCA, 6-8PM. Info: 725-4907.

5 wednesday

Cambridge — Harvard Forum on its non-discrimination policy. Phillips Brooks House, Harvard Yard. 8PM.

Medford — "Sisters Soul to Soul," Wametta Jackson sings Aretha Franklin. Tufts Univ., Cohen Aud. 8PM. \$8 at door; \$5 advance, senior citizens, Tufts students. Info: 381-3493.

Cambridge — Lesbian Liberation. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10PM. Info: 354-8807.

Cambridge — Open weekly Feminist Discussion Group — topic: Having Fun. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10PM. Info: 354-8807.

6 thursday

Boston — GCN's production night: all welcome to proofread & paste-up pages. 5-7PM for proofreading, 8PM-midnight for paste-up. 167 Tremont St., near Park & Boylston T-stops. GCN: 426-4469.

Cambridge — Conga drums and percussion: Latin & African rhythms, beginner & intermediate classes. Central Sq. Info: Buffy, 776-6699.

7 friday

Boston — GCN's volunteer night: all welcome to help mail the paper to our subscribers. Refreshments, good times. Anytime after 6PM. 167 Tremont St., near Park & Boylston T-stops. GCN: 426-4469.

Westboro — Tri-County Association's Friday Night Coffee Club Game Night. Bill & Pete's. Info: 655-4268.

Boston — Am Tikva Oneg Shabbat. Bring something sweet to share. 74 Joy St., Beacon Hill. Info: 782-8894.



Powerlifting, Feb. 8

8 saturday

Boston — Amazon-Adonis VI Powerlifting Meet. South End Gym, 1355-A Washington St., No. 108. 11:45AM. \$3. Info: 451-3514.

Cambridge — Gay/Lesbian Dance at Harvard. Adams House Dining Hall, 38 Plympton St. 9PM-1AM. Info: 495-5476.

Boston — "Something About the Women," with Cathy Brady, political activist & member of Boston INFACT. WMFO 91.5 FM. 11AM.

Cambridge — "Thirteen Ships" launching party and concert. Washburn Aud., Episcopal Divinity School, 99 Brattle St. 8PM. \$6 in advance, \$7 at door.

Concord, NH — "AIDS: Facts and Issues," sponsored by the Alliance for Gay & Lesbian Rights & the Unitarian Universalist Church. Unitarian Universalist, 274 Pleasant St. Noon-6PM. \$10 more/less. Snow date: Feb. 15.

Jamaica Plain — Grand Opening of the Peacock Coffeehouse. Center & Eliot Sts. 8PM. \$3. Emory Wood, Rob Krikorian, and the Marianne Krietlow/Dennis Pearne duo to perform. Childcare available.



Rob Krikorian, Feb. 8

9 sunday

Jamaica Plain — Disabled Lesbians' potluck and discussion. 2-4PM. Accessible. Info: 524-1890.

Brookline — Brookline/Brighton/Allston lesbians potluck dinner. 6PM. Info: 566-7872.

Cambridge — Black & White Men Together. "Perspectives on Africa" by former Peace Corps members. Phillips Brooks House, Harvard Univ. 1-5PM.

Boston — Metropolitan Community Church of Boston, a church of the lesbian & gay community. 131 Cambridge St. Info: 523-7664.

10 monday

Somerville — Support group for battered lesbians. Open only to lesbians who have been or are being abused. On-going, weekly, free. Childcare available. Info: Respond, 623-5900.

11 tuesday

Cambridge — Sanchin Women's School of Karate & Self-Defense classes begin. 595 Mass. Ave., 4th Floor, Central Sq. Sliding-scale fees. Childcare by appointment. Info: 522-9821.

Cambridge — Legacy, a drop-in social for lesbian and gay elders. Cambridge Committee of Elders, 15 Pearl St., Central Sq. 6-8PM. Info: 725-4907.

12 wednesday

Boston — Community Networking Breakfast. Club Cafe. 8AM. Info: 536-4478 or 265-1963.

Cambridge — Lesbian Teachers' support group. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7-9PM. Info: 354-8807.

Brookline — In the Good Old Summertime. Brookline Public Library, 361 Washington St. 7PM. Free. Info: 734-0100.

13 thursday

Boston — Gay Boston, a monthly TV magazine. Access Channel A3. 8PM. Info: 723-5130.

Cambridge — Lesbians Choosing Children Network. Topic: Childbearing losses. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Central Sq. 7:30PM. Info: 354-8807.

Provincetown — The Night of the Iguana, performed by the Provincetown Theatre Company. 460 Commercial St. 8PM. \$6, \$2.50 seniors & students. Through March 2. Info: 487-2695.

Framingham — Pink Triangles, shown by N.O.W. & the Social Concerns Committee of First Parish. Vernon St. 7:30PM. Free. Info: 872-6900.

note this!

The Balcony. Written by Jean Genet. Directed by JoAnne Akalaitis. Translated by Jean-Claude van Itallie. Set by George Tsypin. With John Bottoms, Joan McIntosh, Rodney Hudson, Ben Halley Jr., Diane D'Aquila. At the ART, Loeb Drama Center, Cambridge. Through February 23.

Even with his worldwide reputation as a playwright and novelist, the theatrical works of Jean Genet are rarely performed. It is a treat, then to have Cambridge's American Repertory Theater mount a full-scale version of *The Balcony*. Yet while a full-scale presentation is nice, there are times when this production becomes overblown.

Genet's *Balcony* is set in a nameless country, at an unspecified time, in a brothel run by Madam Irma, which caters to a heavy fantasy crowd. Ordinary men come here and act out their reveries of sex and power: a gas man becomes a bishop; another man becomes a general who treats the resident sex workers like horses; and a clerk dons the robes of a judge. Outside the whorehouse there is a revolution happening with the old rulers about to be assassinated. At the very last moment the government rallies and convinces the brothel patrons to replace the dead dignitaries and restore faith in the old order. In one sweep, erotic fantasy and political reality become one. In Genet's view there is no difference between a whorehouse and a ruling class, fantasy and reality are interchangeable, and everything we do — or imagine — is a role in which we are trapped. It is a frightening vision.

In his production notes, Genet specifies that his brothel is neither sleazy nor classy, that the women are "tarfs," not elegant, in-house call-girls. True to this mandate, while the look of the sets and costumes of JoAnne Akalaitis's production could never be described as tasteful, they are lavish without being crummy, flashy without being cheap. Yet while this elaborateness may bring out the theatricality of the piece, it also begins to obscure Genet's meanings. Akalaitis has also opted to set the brothel in an unnamed Central American country, a specificity which infringes upon some of the larger issues the playwright is approaching.

The Balcony, like most of Genet's writing, is filled and concerned with the power and glory of masturbatory fantasy. We have to believe in the sexual experience of the Judge, the General, and the Bishop if their reincarnation into the real thing is going to have any emotional impact for us. But rather than staging them like High Church rituals, Akalaitis opts for lewdness and low comedy. What is missing here is the sexiness of Genet, that absolute drivenness of sexual desire and imagination that can send us reeling between fantasy and reality. There is a lot of flesh and filigree on stage at the ART; and while some of it — like the Executioner's black leather harness/jock strap outfit — indicate fantasy, too many of the others spell it out. For *The Balcony* to work we should be enticed, and then made afraid of, our own sexual fantasies: too often here we are able to laugh at the eroticism of others.

Yet for all of its faults, this *Balcony* is entertaining. Even its three-hour length — probably twice as long as necessary — never seems to drag. But before you go see it, you may want to read the script: being entertained is not quite the same thing as being challenged or moved.

— Michael Bronski

Calendar compiled by Miranda Kolbe

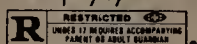
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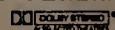


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